



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office

2800 Cottage Way, Suite W1834

Sacramento, California 95825

www.ca.blm.gov



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To: CDD District Manager, All Field Managers
Attn: District FMO's, All Field Office FMO's

From: State Director

Subject: California BLM Policy for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
(SCBA) Units on BLM Engines

DD: 4/15/02

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, (SCBA) units are used in some California wildland fire organizations. Their use provides additional protection to firefighters responding to vehicle fires, dump fires and structure threat fires while providing wildland fire protection through Direct Protection Area Agreements. Increased occurrence of these types of fires has expanded the potential exposure to toxic smoke and gases at wildland fire incidents. It is therefore BLM California's policy that personnel not be exposed to a hazardous atmosphere without the available benefit of SCBA's.

This IM establishes California BLM's policy regarding the use of SCBA's and provides the new standards for their use in the updated BLM California SCBA Standard Operating Procedures Guide. A BLM California SCBA Training Course Guide has also been developed. Both guides will be sent to you under separate cover. Each District/Region must meet the standards set for medical requirements, equipment, training and clothing as established in the BLM California SCBA Standard Operating Procedures Guide by **April 15, 2002**.

The California BLM Fire Equipment Committee has taken steps to provide protection to the firefighter by purchasing new positive pressure SCBA units for all Type 3 engines (class 667) within California. These SCBA units are required to be installed on all the Type 3 engines.

The BLM emphasis in using SCBA units on structure fires will be to preserve life and protect property. Our policy of NOT entering structures for suppression efforts will remain the same. We will continue to provide structure protection from the outside only.

Use of SCBA on vehicle fires will be done in a safe manner. The SCBA units will be worn throughout the extinguishment and mop-up phases of this type of incident. To offer maximum safety to the firefighter during these types of fires, foam will be utilized at all times during extinguishment and mop-up.

Our objective for installing the SCBAs is not to provide a new way for our firefighters to fight fires, but provide protection from what they are already exposed to.

The policy and requirements to be followed by all BLM California suppression forces utilizing SCBA's can be found in the SCBA Standard Operating Procedures Guide. If you have any questions or need a copy of the guide and training manual, please don't hesitate to contact Doug Waggoner, State Fire Operations, at 916-978-4437.

Signed by:
Karen Barnette
Acting State Director

Authenticated by:
Jenny Peterson
Records Management